



## Preparing for climate change: A perspective from local public health officers in California

**Author(s):** Bedsworth L  
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### Abstract:

**BACKGROUND:** The most recent scientific findings show that even with significant emission reductions, some amount of climate change is likely inevitable. The magnitude of the climate changes will depend on future emissions and climate sensitivity. These changes will have local impacts, and a significant share of coping with these changes will fall on local governmental agencies. Public health is no exception, because local public health agencies are crucial providers of disease prevention, health care, and emergency preparedness services. **METHODS:** This article presents the results of a survey of California's local public health officers conducted between August and October 2007. The survey gauged health officers' concerns about the public health impacts of climate change, programs in place that could help to mitigate these health effects, and information and resource needs for better coping with a changing climate. **RESULTS:** The results of this survey show that most public health officers feel that climate change poses a serious threat to public health but that they do not feel well equipped in terms of either resources or information to cope with that threat. Nonetheless, public health agencies currently implement a number of programs that will help these agencies handle some of the challenges posed by a changing climate. **CONCLUSIONS:** Overall, the results suggest that local public health agencies in California are likely in a better position than they perceive to address the threats associated with climate change but that there is a larger role for them to play in climate policy.

**Source:** <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2679607>

### Resource Description

#### Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

#### Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker

**Other Communication Audience:** Local public health officials

#### Exposure :

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weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Air Pollution, Ecosystem Changes, Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Quality, Food/Water Security, Food/Water Security, Sea Level Rise, Temperature, Unspecified Exposure

**Air Pollution:** Allergens, Interaction with Temperature, Particulate Matter

**Extreme Weather Event:** Flooding, Wildfires

**Food/Water Security:** Agricultural Productivity

**Temperature:** Extreme Heat, Fluctuations

**Geographic Feature:**

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

**Geographic Location:**

resource focuses on specific location

United States

**Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Morbidity/Mortality, Respiratory Effect, Other Health Impact

**Infectious Disease:** Foodborne/Waterborne Disease, Vectorborne Disease

**Foodborne/Waterborne Disease:** General Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

**Vectorborne Disease:** Mosquito-borne Disease, Tick-borne Disease

**Mosquito-borne Disease:** General Mosquito-borne Disease

**Tick-borne Disease:** General Tick-borne Disease

**Respiratory Effect:** Asthma, Upper Respiratory Allergy

**Other Health Impact:** Hospital admissions

**Medical Community Engagement:**

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

**Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

**Population of Concern:** A focus of content

**Population of Concern:**

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populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Elderly, Low Socioeconomic Status

**Other Vulnerable Population:** Pre-existing health conditions; mental impairment

**Resource Type:** 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

**Timescale:** 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified